AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Please amend the following paragraphs as indicated:

The first paragraph on page 3:

The present invention is directed to a filtering device for trapping and removing emboli from a body vessel (e.g. an artery). In one embodiment of the invention, a sheath attached to a guide wire maintains a filtering assembly in a collapsed position until the filtering assembly is ready to be deployed in the patient's vasculature. The filtering assembly is attached to a tubular shaft member which is slidable over the guide wire to move the filtering assembly out of the sheath when the filtering assembly is to be deployed and to retract the sheath back over the filtering assembly when the assembly is to collapsed and removed from the vessel. The filtering assembly may be formed from a plurality of angularly spaced splines and a filter member made from mesh or other suitable filtering material. The filter member is disposed on the splines and has properties of passing fluid in the vessel while blocking the passage of emboli in the fluid. The splines may be made from a shape-memory material which allows the ~~spines~~ splines to self expand once the sheath is removed. The ~~spines~~ splines expand against the wall of the vessel when released from the collapsed or compressed position to deploy the filter member in the vessel in order to provide the necessary emboli filtration within the vessel.

The first full paragraph on page 4:

In one aspect of the invention, the tubular shaft member can be made from a nickel titanium (NiTi) hypotube. The splines can also be made from a nickel-titanium (NiTi) alloy or other shape memory material. The ~~spines~~ splines are biased to the deployed or expanded position so that once the sheath is removed, the ~~spines~~ splines will expand radially outward to abut against the wall of the vessel to provide a tight seal which prevents fluid and emboli from passing between the filter member and vessel wall. When the device is to be collapsed and removed from the patient, the physician simply moves the sheath back over the filtering assembly causing the ~~spines~~ splines to collapse, along with the filter member, thus trapping the emboli in the filter member. The lengths of the ~~spines~~ splines and filter member should be sufficiently long so that the filtering assembly traps the emboli deep within the distal end of the filter member. This helps prevent any backflow of trapped emboli into the vessel when the filtering assembly is being collapsed. Thereafter, the entire device can be removed from the patient.

The paragraph beginning on page 7 and continuing to page 8:

The filtering assembly 22 is attached to the tubular shaft member 24 for slidable movement along the guide wire 18. The filtering assembly 22 may be formed from a plurality of annularly spaced splines 26 (FIG. 3) supporting a filter member 28. The filtering assembly 22 is designed to be self expanding from the collapsed position to an expanded position within the vessel 12. In the collapsed position, the filtering

assembly 22 would be disposed within the sheath 20. In the expanded position, the filtering assembly 22 would flare radially outward to engage the wall 30 of the vessel 12. The splines 26 may be formed from a material having shape memory which causes the splines 26 to expand against the wall of the vessel 12 when the filtering assembly 22 is released from the sheath 20. Nitinol is one suitable material which could be used to create the splines 26. The filter member 28 may be made from a mesh or suitable filtering material. For example, the filter member 28 may be made from a thin polymer having small openings to pass the fluid in the vessel 12 while blocking the passage of the emboli 14 in the fluid. The filter member 28 may be coated with an anti-thrombotic agent to minimize blockage of the filter media by thrombosis. The filter material could also be non-porous. The ability of the embolic protection guide wire and filter to deploy and retract multiple times could allow the physician to periodically retract the device to allow blood flow downstream from the filer. Such non-porous materials would include polymeric materials well-known in medical catheter design. Each of the ~~spines~~ splines 26 could be positioned in a recess 31 formed on the tubular shaft member 24 when in the collapsed position to reduce the overall profile of the filtering assembly.

The first full paragraph on page 11:

The sheath 20 can be provided with a variable length to ensure that all of the embolic debris remains in the sheath when the tubular shaft member 24 and the filtering assembly 22 are pushed back into the sheath 20. The lengths of the ~~spines~~

splines and filter member should be sufficiently long so that a deep pocket is created that traps the emboli deep within the distal end of the filter member 28. This helps prevent any backflow of trapped emboli 14 into the vessel when the filtering assembly 22 is being collapsed. The sheath 20 may have a slightly flared proximal end 44 which helps to receive the distal end 46 of the filtering assembly 22. After the tubular shaft member 24 and the filtering assembly 22 have been pulled back into the sheath 20, the filtering assembly 22 can be withdrawn from the vessel 12. This is indicated schematically by a hollow arrow 48 in FIG. 7.